

MINUTES FROM MORNINGSIDESIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (MCC) – DRAFT

21 JANUARY 2026 AT THE OPEN DOOR

Present

Moira Gibson, Lix Robertson, Ray Robertson, Arne Strid, Alastair Webb, Caroline McKinley, John Robson, Callum McLeavy, Jean Thompson, Jane Brown, Sheena Nimmo, Kerry Watt, Robert Armour, Kerr Fraser, Iain Meiklejohn, Helen Sang, Ken Harvey, Paul Bailey, Polly Purvis

1. Apologies

Serena Naismith, Carol Duncan, Goff Cantley, Cllr Marie-Clare Munro.

8.1 Events in Morningside

The Chair introduced this Agenda item to discuss ways for Morningside Community Council to boost its profile and engage the community. Communications and Events may become regular Agenda topics. Presentations were heard from the Open Door and Morningside Parish Church – Umbrella Festival.

Open Door

Jean Thompson, a former MCC Chair, gave a presentation on the Open Door. It is a charity, not a Council facility, and is run by a board of Trustees. Its adult care groups operate Monday-Friday, with trained staff offering physical and mental stimulation to benefit those attending and to offer respite to their carers. Some places are funded by the Council, some by self-directed support with funding from the Scottish Government, and some places are self-funding (around £65 per session). Free taster sessions are available. Its work is highly valued by many in the local community to whom it offers a lifeline.

Volunteers are always sought for a variety of roles, including some on the board. A recent grant has enabled the purchase of an 8-seater electric bus and occasional volunteer drivers (no PSV licence required) would be welcomed. Monthly coffee and cake fundraisers have been successful and the attractive space on the ground floor, previously Peggy's Café, is available on an ad hoc basis to charitable and similar groups. Anyone wishing to raise funds by doing the Kilt Walk would be warmly welcomed and supported.

Morningside Parish Church

One of four churches in the area, Morningside Parish Church, like the others, is a community hub offering services and facilities to a range of community groups and local businesses. Its roof is in need of repair and so Kerry Watt and Robert Armour are organising an Umbrella Festival from 28 May – 14 June. Sponsors (£100) of 150 large, coloured umbrellas for displays and sculptures, both inside and outside, are being sought. Individuals will be invited to donate £10 for a small, coloured umbrella, around 1,000 of which will be tied to the railings to create a rainbow effect. Local schools and businesses are invited to become involved, along with youth groups, care homes and so on. Concerts, beetle drives, ceilidhs, quizzes,

afternoon teas and other events will augment the programme along with sales of bespoke merchandise. MCC is asked to promote the event through its publicity channels.

General Profile-raising

The Chair asked all those present to pen some thoughts on what would raise awareness of MCC and help develop greater community interest and spirit. The results will be explored at the next meeting. The need for a 'What's On' noticeboard, both actual and digital, was raised as part of a wider look at communications channels.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of November's meeting were approved.

3. Planning

The application for the proposed 5G phone mast at the junction of Cluny Avenue and Morningside Road has been withdrawn.

The meeting was informed that a proposal for a 2-storey build over a garage at No 1 The Crescent on Morningside Drive was on the Planning website.

4. Local Place Plan

Two members of the LPP sub-committee will meet with Anna Grant from the Council next week. It is hoped the timetable formerly proposed can be adhered to, with a public consultation in March, after which the draft will be submitted to the Council for comment before being formally approved, submitted and then published.

5. Travelling Safely

There is no update on the situation with regard to safer crossings on the roads to and from South Morningside Primary School, nor on the situation at Greenbank Lane.

The new Voi bikes are now at various sites around the Morningside area, with a possible introduction of a dedicated on-road parking space, and John Robson offered to give anyone who wants one a demonstration of how they work.

The start of work on the new roads layout within the Braid Estate, as per the adoption of Option 3 following previous public consultation, has been delayed by three months whilst the Council investigates various associated matters. The traffic statistics requested at a previous meeting will be made available on the MCC website.

5. Financial Position

In the Treasurer's absence, the Chair said that financial operations are now fully electronic, with all relevant correspondence being accommodated by The Open Door. Bills have been paid and there is approximately £1,450 available for advancement of the Local Place Plan.

6. Correspondence

The Secretary noted that the Astley Ainslie Community Trust (AACT) is looking for Trustees. Helen Sang, representing the AACT, said that the NHS will probably stay on part of the site. AACT is also setting up sub-committees focussing on specific areas of interest and will be looking for experts to join.

8. Any Other Competent Business

Wires and Cables

The meeting heard from Liz and Roy Robinson of Falcon Road who have concerns about the plethora of wires and cables hanging from their tenement building and from several others in the area. Many of these must be redundant and they are concerned about safety and aesthetics, as well as cables banging against windows in the wind. They can also cause a trip hazard to visually-impaired people. Does MCC know the legal position? Are these cables the property of the company installing them or of the resident purchasing the service? Can they be removed and, if so, by whom? Polly Purvis kindly offered to get in touch with Open Reach to clarify the situation.

Braid Avenue Trees

An audit found about 20 trees missing. New trees will be chosen and planted, with residents asked to care for them and keep them watered.

Hotel at former Post Office

Contractors have worked to minimise noise during piling, but nearby residents may still be affected. An emergency contact number was requested to address concerns directly.

Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC)

Ian Meiklejohn, MCC's representative on the EACC, attends fortnightly meetings which are the interface between EACC and Community Councils. He was asked if, at a future meeting, he might be able to find out more about the architecture of the interface, ie the role of intermediary bodies such as Locality Committees and Neighbourhood Partnerships (if they still exist), none of which appear to touch the work of MCC or Morningside generally.

Good wishes

Good wishes were extended to Cllr Ross who recently broke his leg whilst cycling and is currently recuperating, and to South Morningside Primary School's girls' football team whose campaign for a winners' trophy of equal size to that of the boys' cup won national and international acclaim.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on 18 February 2026, at 7.30pm at The Open Door.